

This marks an ongoing practice of promoting violence in the minority communities so as to divide and rule them. As they did in Gujarat a few years ago, the Hindu government set in motion bloodshed to keep the minority community—Muslims then, Sikhs now—divided.

Madam Speaker, this is reprehensible, unacceptable, and undemocratic. It is outrageous behavior for any government and it should not be supported by countries like ours. We must stop aid and trade with India and we must support freedom for Khalistan and the other nations seeking their freedom from Indian rule.

The Council of Khalistan put out a good press release condemning the Indian government's incitement of sectarian violence.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN CONDEMNS PROMOTION OF SECTARIAN VIOLENCE BY INDIA

WASHINGTON, DC, May 16, 2007.—The Council of Khalistan condemned the recent violence in Punjab, sparked by an advertisement in the newspaper by Baba Gurmit Ram Rahim Singh, the head of Dera Sacha Sauda, in which Baba Gurmit Ram Rahim Singh dressed as Guru Gobind Singh and advertised that he would give Amrit to anyone who asked. This is reserved only for the Panj Piaras. This is an insult to the Sikh religion and clearly backed by the Indian government, said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, the government pro tempore of Khalistan, which leads the struggle for Khalistan's independence.

"There are no Deras or sects in the Sikh religion. There is only one Sikh religion and Sikh Nation," said Dr. Aulakh. "Fake Babas like Baba Gurmit Ram Rahim Singh are part of the Indian government's ongoing effort to weaken the Sikh religion and prevent Sikhs from achieving freedom," he said.

Next month marks the anniversary of the Golden Temple massacre, Dr. Aulakh noted. During that attack, young boys ages 8 to 13 were taken outside and asked if they supported Khalistan, the independent Sikh country. When they answered with the Sikh religious phrase "Bole So Nihal," they were shot to death. The Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh holy scriptures, written in the time of the Sikh Gurus, were shot full of bullet holes and burned by the Indian forces.

Former President Bill Clinton wrote in the foreword to Madeleine Albright's book that Indian forces were responsible for the massacre of 38 Sikhs in 2000 in the village of Chithisinghpura. Recently, two leading Sikh activists were arrested for peacefully protesting the construction of a statue to honor Beant Singh, the late Chief Minister who presided over the murder of tens of thousands of Sikhs. In 2005, 35 Sikhs were arrested for making speeches and raising the flag of Khalistan. Sikh farmers are forced by the government to buy supplies and seeds for unaffordably high prices and forced to sell their crops well below market prices.

"These incidents show that we need to free our homeland, Khalistan," said Dr. Aulakh. "Remember what former Akal Takht Jathedar Professor Darshan Singh said: 'If a Sikh is not a Khalistani, he is not a Sikh.'"

A report issued by the Movement Against State Repression (MASR) shows that India admitted that it held 52,268 political prisoners under the repressive "Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act" (TADA) even though it expired in 1995. Many have been in illegal custody since 1984. There has been no list published of those who were acquitted under TADA and those who are still rotting in Indian jails. Additionally, according to Amnesty International, there are tens of thousands of other minorities being held as political prisoners. MASR report quotes the

Punjab Civil Magistracy as writing "if we add up the figures of the last few years the number of innocent persons killed would run into lakhs [hundreds of thousands.]" The Indian government has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, more than 300,000 Christians in Nagaland, over 90,000 Muslims in Kashmir, tens of thousands of Christians and Muslims throughout the country, and tens of thousands of Tamils, Assamese, Manipuris, and others. The Indian Supreme Court called the Indian government's murders of Sikhs "worse than a genocide."

"Only in a free Khalistan will the Sikh Nation prosper and get justice," said Dr. Aulakh. "When Khalistan is free, we will have our own Ambassadors, our own representation in the UN and other international bodies, and our own leaders to keep this sort of thing from happening. We won't be at the mercy of the brutal Indian regime and its Hindu militant allies," he said. "Democracies don't commit genocide. India should act like a democracy and allow a plebiscite on independence for Khalistan and all the nations of South Asia," Dr. Aulakh said. "We must continue to pray for and work for our God-given birthright of freedom," he said. "Without political power, religions cannot flourish and nations perish."

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 413, which recognizes the service of United States Merchant Marine Veterans. I encourage all of my colleagues to support this important resolution.

United States Merchant Mariners played a critical role during World War II, delivering troops, tanks, food, airplanes, fuel and other needed supplies to every theater of the war. The Merchant Mariners were the necessary link between the supplies that were manufactured in the U.S. and used overseas.

The Merchant Mariners took part in every invasion from Normandy to Okinawa and suffered the highest casualty rate of any of the branches of the Armed Forces. Despite their valiant service, the U.S. Merchant Marines were not included in the 1944 G.I. Bill of Rights. In 1988, they were finally granted veteran status, but some portions of the G.I. Bill have never been made available to the Merchant Marines and the lost benefits can never be recouped.

In April I had the opportunity to deliver testimony to the Veterans Affairs Committee on behalf of my constituent, World War II Merchant Marine veteran Bruce Felknor, urging support of H.R. 23, the Belated Thank You to the Merchant Mariners of World War II Act of 2007. I hope that the 110th Congress will enact that important legislation into law as well.

I'm so pleased that the Merchant Mariners are finally getting the respect and attention they deserve for their service and sacrifice to our country. For more than 40 years, their remarkable and distinguished service has gone by virtually unnoticed by our government and people.

Again, I urge all of my colleagues to support H. Res. 413.

TRIBUTE TO ASH GROVE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 23, 2007

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Ash Grove Christian Church in rural Windsor, IL, on the 175th anniversary of its founding. The church will be celebrating this historic occasion with a special service and program on June 3, 2007.

Ash Grove Christian church was founded in June of 1832 with John Storm Sr. as pastor. The church started with only 18 members. Ash Grove Christian Church is the oldest Christian Church in Shelby County and one of the oldest Christian churches in the entire State of Illinois.

Today, the congregation of Ash Grove Christian Church still holds traditional Sunday morning worship services with Jim Dona as pastor.

I am pleased to congratulate Ash Grove Christian Church on this blessed occasion. My prayers will be with the congregation as they celebrate this anniversary. May God continue to bless Ash Grove Christian Church.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN WRITES TO CANADIAN JUSTICE MINISTER ABOUT AIR INDIA INVESTIGATION

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 23, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, as you know, the government of Canada has undertaken another investigation into the 1985 Air India bombing. Recently, the Council of Khalistan wrote to the Canadian Justice Minister about that investigation.

The letter states that "the Indian government continues to try to blame Sikhs for this atrocity, despite the fact that Ripudaman Singh Malik and Ajaib Singh Bagri were acquitted by a Canadian judge, who said that the witnesses against them were not credible." In the letter, Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, notes that the Canadian Security Investigation Service (CSIS) said at the time, "if you really want to clear the incidents quickly, take vans down to the Indian High Commission and the consulates in Toronto and Vancouver, load up everybody and take them down for questioning. We know it and they know it that they were involved."

The Indian Consul General in Toronto, Mr. Surinder Malik, pulled his wife and daughter off the flight at the last minute. A friend of his who was a car dealer also cancelled his reservation suddenly. Mr. Malik called in a lot of information about the case before the incident was even public knowledge, including a tip to look for an "L. Singh" on the passenger manifest. "L. Singh" was the name under which one of the bombers held his tickets. The other was "M. Singh." Later, a man named Lal